DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 138 532 SO 010 011

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TITLE Progressive Education in Eretz-Israel in the Years 1915-1939: A Model for Development of New Educational Theories in a Changing Society.
PUB DATE Apr 77
NOTE 40p.; Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New York, New York, April 3-8, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Comparative Education; *Educational Development; *Educational History; Educational Objectives; Educational Planning; Educational Policy; Educational Theories; Elementary Secondary Education; Government Role; Immigrants; *Models; *Progressive Education; Public Education; Relevance (Education); Social Change; Social Influences; Teacher Characteristics
IDENTIFIERS *Israel

ABSTRACT

The history of progressive education in Eretz-Israel (Palestine) from 1915-39 is intended as a model of a new pedagogical theory adopted by a changing society. Topics discussed include the Jewish community in Eretz-Israel, pedagogical experiments, progressive education as a pedagogical movement, the relationship between school and society, the role of the educator in progressive education, and learning characteristics peculiar to progressive education. The paper describes and evaluates the alliance between progressive concepts in education and the Labour Movement. Two basic assumptions are offered: first, this alliance is encouraged if the basic pedagogical concepts are in agreement with the ideals guiding the society; second, creation of new man-centered social order encourages an open atmosphere in which concepts such as progressive education are acceptable. Against this political and social background, progressive education developed through three stages: (1) educational experiments which attempted to initiate pedagogical experiments elsewhere; (2) the pedagogical movement resulting from a dynamic interaction between the school and its social environment; and (3) an educational system characterized by the dependence of school on society as a whole. References are included. (Author/DB)

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Progressive Education in Eretz-Israel in the Years 1915-1939: A Model for Development of New Educational Theories in a Changing Society

I. Introduction

On his visit to the Soviet Union John Dewey entered a realm in which a society in a process of self-shaping was adopting the essence of the progressive thought of education.[1] The fact that the Soviet society had formulated its social aims in such a definite way and translated them to educational terms led Dewey to describe the situation sympathetically, defining it as unique.[2] Dewey really believed that this situation was of advantage to the development of progressive education. His statement has been skeptically received by historians of education.[3] The contradiction between his theory and the circumstances he met in Russia did not prevent him from seeing the future of progressive education in that society optimistically.[4] Dewey's description and assessment was inaccurate on two points: First, his impression that the Soviet Union was the first whole society to adopt the theory of the new education, and, second, and more important to our discussion here, in his unrealistic view of the future development of the progressive education in that society.

This paper seeks to describe and to evaluate a similar situation in which the basic concepts of progressive education were adopted by a society in the making - it is concerned with the alliance between progressive concepts in education and the Labor Movement in Eretz-Israel[5] through the years 1921-1939. This was an era of fulfillment of the Jewish national rejuvenation in Eretz-Israel

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in which the Labor Movement played a central role. That social movement became a dominant element in the Jewish community as well as in the state of Israel until the present.

The study of the facts and the processes which were involved in creating the alliance between the Labor Movement and progressive education can enable us to formulate the general basic assumptions set forth below:

1) The probability of new pedagogical ideas, which have a social signi[illegible]cance, and their implementation being recognized as the way of ed[illegible]ion of a certain society is conditioned by the quality of their relations with a society in a process of shaping new forms. Substantial, or sometimes associative, similarity or parallelism of the basic pedagogical concepts to the ideals guiding the society, create the background for such an alliance.

2) A society, resting on rejection of tradition and on the creation of a new social order that is a "man-centered" society, is open to adopt educational concepts such as those of progressive education. The typical process of crystalization which takes place in such a society begins with an emphasis upon the freedom of the individual and continues with the shaping of "society-centered" forms of life and social institutions. These forms are organized on centralized or even totalitarian principles purporting to present the basic social ideas while demanding the conformity and uniformity of the individuals. When that process took place in societies, in particular socialistic ones such as the Labor Movement in Eretz-Israel, it created the background for alliance with the new ideas in education.

These assumptions regarding the course of affairs which occurred in Eretz-Israel lead us to the conclusion that progressive education there has been going through three stages of development. Those stages may serve as a possible model to evaluate the interrelationship of a changing society and education in similar conditions:

1) The stage of pedagogical experimentation. This is a period of social heterogeneity, of belief in social ideas and in the possibility of their accomplishment. It is a period in which there is no central organizational authority, and thus permits various expressions of social life, including education. Educators and educationists have tried in different societies to realize in that stage their new concepts of education.

2) The stage of the pedagogical movement, characterized by mutual interaction between the school and its close social environment. The ideal of the new society, which became concrete in this situation acted upon both the school and its surrounding society. The school tried to build itself as an embryo of a society. The teacher became the dynamic factor in determining the methods of education and its contents, in relation to the surrounding society in the making.

3) In the third stage, which is generally a consequence of crystalization of social forms and of a struggle between the new society and different social and political forms, the pedagogical movement became an educational system with all the typical qualities. The main character of this stage was the dependence of

the education upon the ideology, the daily interests, the central institutions, and the symbols of the formed society as a whole. the educational authority hired and fired teachers, supervised schools, prepared programs and promulgated administrative and organizational rules. Loyalty to the social movement and its institutions became the main criterion for selecting teachers.

The question, whether such a process finally leads to a significant and substantial change in the quality of the ideas and concepts of the new educational approach remains without decisive answer. The fate of new ideas in education depends on the character of the society in which they are expressed, on the processes which take place within that society, and particularly on the social, political, and economic forms which are finally obtained.

Progressive education in Eretz-Israel has gone through these three stages. However its development shaped original forms of education. The basic concepts of that education were adopted by the Labor Movement. That movement arose in a pluralistic society which got its strength and forms by continuous struggle, a struggle that was caused by meaningful differences between social groups in the perception of the Jewish desired sovereignty and its fulfillment. The Labor Movement itself was not homogeneous either. It consisted of several political parties.

The construction of the Jewish society since the turn of the century and the processes which took place in it may be used as a background for a better understanding of what happened to progressive education in Eretz-Israel. That background will be described briefly below.

II. The Jewish Community in Eretz-Israel 1919-1939

The national and political organization of the Jewish community in Eretz-Israel began before the British conquest in 1918. Some attempts to organize that part of the community which shared the goal of national rejuvenation were made at the turn of the century. However, until the end of World War I, the community was so widely seperate and divergent that it was characterized by the lack of any common trait except religion. There was no common culture, language or economy, and the absence of a national organization was the most significant lack. The World Zionist Organization established, a few years ago, was responsible for advancing the case for establishing a national home for the Jewish people and represented the organized community in the country on most political issues. The efforts to organize the Jewish community to assure its proper representation in the new regime led to the first general elections, in 1921, to choose the Assembly of Representatives which was formed to operate as a legislative body.[6] It was agreed that this body would represent the organized community in issues related to civic matters, whereas issues related to political matters, in particular negotiation for the creation of a national home in Eretz-Israel, would be the responsibility of the World Zionist Organization. Such an agreement did not prevent dissent on certain issues, such as the question of who would be in charge of the national education system in the country.[7] The authority of the Assembly of Representatives during the twenties was limited because its power rested on the good will of a voluntary society, and on the

necessity to get the consent and the approval of the British Mandate government for proposed regulations before they could go into effect.

Pluralism was the basic tenet of the organized part of the Jewish community in Eretz-Israel. This pluralism was reflected in the fact that the Assembly of Representatives consisted of splits, sectors, and parties based on vocational, religious, cultural, regional and sexual attributes. Against this political background the main two labor parties appeared, presenting a relatively more cohesive and rational front.[8]

In 1920 these same parties had established the General Organization of the Jewish Workers in Eretz-Israel, a union which included both rural and urban workers. That organization became the most cohesive and dominant force in social and political life and has remained so from that time on, until today. The Labor Movement as a whole held the social and political hegemony in the elected institutions of the Jewish settlement.[9]

At the same time the Labor Movement, through the General Workers Organization provided for the needs of its members in a wide spectrum of life, including culture and education. Since the national and political authority during the twenties drew its power from loyalty rather than law, the leadership of the Labor Movement was strongly opposed by some social groups, who were located , in political terms, to the center and the right in the political spectrum. Many of these groups were concentrated in the agricultural colonies established by philanthropic companies or individuals,

and many were in the city of Tel Aviv. The Labor Movement itself as mentioned already was not homogeneous. The differences between the two major parties, until they joined in 1930 were substantial: "Hapoel Hazair" (the Young Worker) party developed the ideology of national rejuvenation based on productive work as a way of life and on the establishment of a new society characterized by social justice and morality. "Hachdut Haavoda" (the United Work) party, the bigger one, in the beginning believed in an inevitable conflict between classes because of the incompatibility of their interests. In time that ideology became more moderate and flexible and the party developed a new policy concept defined as "from class to people", based on national cooperation among divergent groups.

The waves of emigration after the turn of the century brought groups of pioneers who established new types of agricultural settlements in order to create a new national life, based on principles of cooperation and collectivism. New social concepts, in particular those that stressed the inevitable class struggle, were brought by pioneers from east Europe. Inspired by the Soviet revolution, these immigrants tried to apply socialistic beliefs to the reality they met in the new land.

Since 1924, not only have revolutionary concepts been in the focus of social controversy, but also such a reality has existed. On the one hand, a proletariat of hired workers and members of rural and communal settlements, and, on the other hand employers, merchants, and other property owners.

Such a social heterogeneity tended to be fertile soil,

psychologically as well as practically, for class confrontation. The social tension increased to its peak during the thirties. Parallel institutions attached to political parties and movements were established to provide social services to their members. However, the authority of the central national institutions not decreased but instead has gradually increased within a democratic framework. Unlike other new societies, that national society was not built on economic and industrial foundations. The common aim shared by the majority, formulated in ideological terms, was the achievement of Jewish rejuvenation in both the political and social areas.

The social state of affairs became a background for pluralism in education as well. Social and political heterogeneity led to the creation of an original type of educational system. It was divided into three trends or sub-systems: Religious education, General education, and the education of the Labor Movement, according to their dependence on a wide social or political framework. This educational system existed until 1953 when the Israeli parliament enacted the State Education law.

The Labor Movement kept a firm hold on its pedagogical independence, and, until 1939, on the administrative independence of its educational system as well. This independence became a source of confrontation and struggle in the Jewish settlement during the twenties and mainly the thirties and the conflict reflected the state of political and social relations within the society as a whole.

The situation of a society in the making, on one hand, and of pluralism in education, on the other, enabled those educators who had initiative, to implement their ideas if they could recruit students for their school and get material resources. The possibilities for educational innovation have been reduced with the crystalization of the national system of education. A little group of educators, which was familiar with the new educational thought, that is, the concepts of progressive education, attempted to implement their belief. Few of them were very dynamic, and at the time they affiliated with the Labor Movement. That alliance established the background for our basic assumptions regarding the development of progressive education in Eretz-Israel.

III. Stage A: Pedagogical Experiments 1915-1924

Acquaintance with the new educational thought started in Eretz-Israel at the beginning of the century. Jewish educators who received their professional training in Europe had an interest in the application of the basic concepts of progressive education to questions of Jewish national rejuvenation. A few of these educators became familiar with these ideas in Germany, Switzerland, and others learned them from Shatsky's work in Russia.

The periodical called "Education" was established in 1911 by the Teachers' Organization. During the first year, it published a few articles surveying new theories of education, such as those of J. Dewey, Kershensteiner, and others.[10] Those ideas were supported within the company of educators in Eretz-Israel. Some educators advocated these ideas as suitable for official adoptation by the national society as a whole.

Even abroad, this trend in education received attention and support from Jewish educators, mainly those in eastern Europe who advocated a synthesis between the idea of nationalism and that of education through work.[11] According to that perception, a society which has passed from a stage of longing for a divine salvation to a stage of self-fulfillment must seek to create a new man, active and ready to participate in the national task. Progressive education was expected to be an answer to that need.

There were no progressive schools in Eretz-Israel at that time, nevertheless, there were, here and there, educators who tried to implement, according to their own views, the basic concepts of the new education. Some of these educational experiments were made in the city, but most were in rural areas, and in particular in the communal and cooperative social unit, the kibbutz. These experiments were also inspired and motivated by the ideals of the new social surroundings. It is useless to attempt to identify the impact of a definite educational direction on that educational thought and practice. However, it can be described as an influence of the atmosphere of dissatisfaction with traditional education, on one hand and the general progressive approach, on the other. It is impossible to state definitely when the first attempt was made in the country to apply the new concepts of education. Apparently, however, the first systematic experiment was made in the years 1915-1916 in a small agricultural colony, near Jerusalem, called Har-Tuv. D. Edelson, who was in charge of the school, claimed that the traditional elementary

school didn't adjust itself to the demands of life for two reasons: neither society nor parents were interested in education and teachers lacked knowledge and proper preparation to use new and useful methods. He determined three goals he wished to achieve: (1) to keep the program in general terms the same as in the elementary school in Eretz-Israel; (2) to change and improve the methods, according to local conditions; (3) to have the students themselves write, learning and reading books which would reflect their immediate environment.[12] That educator was influenced by some of the German educators such as Kershensteiner, Sharrelmann, and others.[13] Among them were those who advocated the social trend of progressive education, but most directed their attention to the individual student and to the learning method.[14] It seems to be a reliable statement that the learning method had the most significant impact on that educational experience. The natural and social surroundings of the school, including climate, agriculture, and rural way of life, were used to give the child an experience appropriate to his psychological development. Although the influence of German progressive thought is clear, it is interesting to mention that we can definitely identify elements which were expressed by John Dewey a few years ago.[15]

Two events, involved in establishing the progressive trend in education, deserve to be stressed. First, a small group of educators established a new school named Kindergarten and private School of Work.[16] One of the prominent members of this group was the educator who worked, a few years ago, in Har-Tuv. Second, that group established connections with Z.Bernfeld, an Austrian psycho-

analyst, and a distinguished advocate of the new education, who was director of the Institute for Research in Childhood and youth. A periodical, printed in Hebrew, called "The New Education in Eretz-Israel" was the main result of that cooperation.[17] In 1920, that group presented before the first assembly of the organized Jewish teachers the plan to establish the School of Work.[18] This was the first time, a detailed description of the new education in Europe was presented in Eretz-Israel and the School of Work to be established was also sketched.

The proposal encountered various views and opinions. Generally there were three types of reactions. (1) Some responded as advocates, claiming that such an experience might help to provide a proper answer to the need for education for a life of work. (2) Others viewed it in positive terms, but assessed the idea of a national system of learning through work as an utopian one. (3) The third group strongly opposed the idea, arguing that such a school would be unconnected to Jewish roots, and would result in ignorance. Finally, at the end of 1921, the school was established and had the moral encouragement of the British Mandate government and of public and professional groups, mainly because of its private nature. An interesting fact is that the founders of the school, while becoming familiar with the German expressions of the New Education, wished to follow in a general way Dewey's methods.[19] Basically, the school in daily operation relied on the four following principles:

1) Learning by work

2) Learning by experience

3) Learning through accidental and unscheduled opportunities

4) Creating a new social and educational atmosphere in school.

In October, 1922, the new magazine, called "The New Education in Eretz-Israel" was published once and no more. Its editors, the founders of the School of Work, defined the state of progressive education in Eretz-Israel as a stage of imitation, but they clearly expressed their hope to pave an original way for education appropriate to the specific conditions of the Jewish society in the country.[20]

In 1924, after two years of autonomy, the School of Work became the first city's school of workers' children under the ownership and supervision of the Committee of Culture of the Workers' General Organization. The name of the school was changed to Home of Education for Workers' Children.

During those two years of the School of Work existence, other attempts were made in both the urban and the rural areas to follow the ideas of the new era in education. Generally, these attempts were the result of personal initiative, and were not connected one to another. However, the School of Work became the nucleus of that trend.

There is no doubt that the dominant factor in paving the way for progressive education at that stage was the educators themselves. The attention of the surrounding society was given to economic, social and day-to-day issues rather than to problems of education. It is important to emphasize that an analysis of various teachers' reports

of that time reveals no specific educational influence but shows the impact of a climate which became widespread after the turn of the century. That climate in Eretz-Israel consisted of (1) the common ideas of progressive education in East and West Europe and to some degree in the U.S.A., (2) the pedagogical and social views of the educator, (3) the social environment in which the educator worked. Generally speaking, although the necessity of education to be matched to the new national aims and needs, nevertheless, it was the individual approach of the progressive education that characterized the educational deed in that time. A free choice of the student used as a practical principle, while the surrounding, in which the student had to reach his experience, was based on various factors, including his peer group.

As in other societies, those attempts and experiments, mainly the private School of Work, became the pioneer and light of an educational approach which intended to lead a pedagogical movement. Moreover, those attempts, and the progressives who carried them on, have tried to suggest educational solutions to a new society in the making, based on new social values. In the next stage, the alliance between the two trends was established.

IV. .Stage B: Progressive Education as a Pedagogical Movement 1924-1930

The social processes described in the introduction have developed in two directions. A social network of the Labor Movement and its institutions was established, and on the other hand, the social units which constituted that network got their own forms and shapes.

The communal agrarian forms of life have belonged to the Labor Movement, but at the beginning, each of them was a social unit, almost entirely independent, in particular in matters of culture and education. The interest of the social unit as a whole in questions of education grew with the increase in the number of its children. A mutual connection between school and society became stronger. Such a mutual relationship laid the foundation for the alliance between Progressive Education and the social ideas of the Labor Movement. Unlike the workers in the cities and in the colonies who maintained a proletarian spirit of life within a hostile neighborhood, those who lived in rural areas established forms of social life, communal in their very nature, which were built as republics of workers[21] aiming to realize social ideas and a homogeneous way of life, and creating a culture which is unique.

From the educational point of view, the central and common aim, acceptable since the middle of the twenties, was described as "Continuity", that is to say, the aim was to assure that the new generation would be ready to continue the way paved by the founders' generation in particular, in those communal and semi-communal settlements.

The rejection of the well-established educational systems: The General and the Religious education laid the foundation for both an alliance with a new educational approach and an independent system of education run by the institutions of the Labor Movement. It is of remarkable significance that the first formulated ideas of how to educate workers' children were put before the public by the founders of the private School of Work.[22] Furthermore, they offered their school as the first one in the city for the workers' children, to be

owned and supervised by the institutions of the Labor Movement.

The relevant question is why a heterogeneous society in the process of formation, rooted ideologically in the Jewish heritage as well as in the new social trends, adopted pedagogical concepts of the Progressive Education. One can argue that the answer is embodied in the question itself: the consciousness of being different, the heterogeneity, and most of all, what seemed to be similiarity between the pedagogical concepts and the social values. Two values became common and widespread in that society: the wish to return to productive work as a way of life, in particular manual work, and the aim to set-up a new social order, built upon social justice, cooperation, and equality. Those ideas were close to two of the bases of the progressive method in education: the self experience, expressed by the recognition of the necessity for active learning, and the creation of a proper environment for that experience, in particular an appropriate social setting. That similarity established the background for the public discussion concerning the suitability of those pedagogical concepts to the basic needs of the Labor Movement in Eretz-Israel. At the end of 1923, the School of Work became the first Home of Education for Workers' Children in the city. Pedagogically, it was run by the educators who founded it two years ago as a private school, but during 1924, controversies relating to educational policy arose between the educational staff and the representatives of the Labor Movement's institutions. Confrontations and controversies occurred in the rural settlements as well. The more radical the social unit was, the more systematic and intense was

the public discussion in regard to the kind of education needed.

The progressive belief which connected educators to a common activity, the initial relationship between that education and the social units of the Labor Movement, the public discussion regarding the educational methods to be adopted, and last, the attempts to realize the new educational theories in the schools, established the bases for the transformation of the educational experiments into a Pedagogical Movement during the second half of the twenties. Reformulation of educational aims was no longer only an expression of a radical approach of educators, and educationists, but also was one of the main results of a significant change in social forms of life and in the increased social awareness of the need of appropriate education. As one of the Labor Movement leaders wrote: "Behind us, demolished schools. We look forward to a future society which educates its children with vigor. We wish to destroy and to rebuild...therefore, we must create a type of education appropriate to our reality and aspirations. The issue of education for us is a question of survival."[23]

The term Pedagogical Movement is based on several characteristics, expressing dynamics in the process of shaping educational qualities, as will be described below. Although the Pedagogical Movement is a well-known concept, we would like to define it in sociological terms. These terms were used in 1930 by one of the progressives in Eretz-Israel.[24] He argued that educational experiment tries to pave a way for educational movement, "...the latter arises from the existing situation within the society. Educational experiment is impossible unless it is conditioned in social circumstances,

and its future projection directed to a social context."[25] From the social point of view, the educational concepts embodied in the experiments are generally best absorbed after a turning point in national life or in a situation of adjustment to a new country. In these eras, new educational movements that express the contradiction between the new and the traditional are rising. He has tried to identify such a movement in the Soviet Union, in the United States, and in Eretz-Israel. The new Jewish society in the country was in a stage of readjustment and was attempting to form a new way of life. That social construction was characterized by several things: economic weakness, absence of a strong social organization, a multiplicity of languages, weakness of tradition, and search for a new self-identity.[26] According to that sociological analysis, these characteristics created the soil for the cooperation between the new society, (the Labor Movement), and the new education, that is to say, they set the stage for the Pedagogical Movement. This cooperation pulled the educational experiment from its isolation and gave it the dynamic dimension of a movement.

Three central traits characterized progressive education in Eretz-Israel as a Pedagogical Movement: 1)The Mutual Relationship between the school and its immediate adult society in the crystalization of educational forms, 2) the educator as a dynamic element and a pedagogical authority, 3) the formulation of educational foundations in a dynamic synthesis between educational concepts and social ideas. These traits deserve a more detailed description, because of their uniqueness.

1. School and Society

To avoid internal controversies, educators in the Labor Movement in Eretz-Israel described educational work in a general manner. "The common goal of our education is to train the youngster to realize productive and creative life."[27] Such a general definition does not differentiate between the two main elements which established the school environment: the natural close society and the larger, comprehensive one. The relations between the school and the close society have generally been direct, while the connections between the school and the larger society has been indirect and has generally been maintained by institutions, parties, and symbols. The stage of Pedagogical Movement is characterized by direct and mutual relation between the school and its surrounding society. In the stage in which we deal, that society has based on pure democratic qualities and all issues were under the control of the general assembly of the adult society. A way of life and culture had not yet been shaped, not only because this was the initial stage of development, but because no decisive answer could be found to the fundamental question: exactly what forms have to be shaped? The general direction was agreed upon. All the rest, including education was in a process of clarification and creation. Without established forms, it is unnecessary to set up curricula which represent a crystalized way of life. The goal to build the school as an embryonic society while the adult society itself is in the process of making is difficult and raises questions whose solution can be found only through a daily interaction between

the school and the society. That interaction in the various settlements faced two pedagogical questions: 1) Either school has to reflect only its immediate society or it has to be rooted deeply in the Jewish society and cultural heritage as a whole; and 2) How can a new society, free and democratic on one hand but aiming to achieve uniformity in the way of life of its members, on the other, settle the contradiction between child-centered school and a directed one supposed to serve social aims? These questions were rooted in the controversy over whether national rejuvenation is a process of continuity or a social revolution. In practice, this issue resulted in a sharp confrontation between the group who strongly advocated adoptation of the progressive concepts of education, and the other group, led by the official representatives of the Labor Movements' institution for education and culture who recommended a very selective choice among those concepts. These officials argued that some pedagogical principles contradict the Jewish ideas of enlightenment, that the knowledge obtained by the worker's child should be equal to that of the capitalist's child, and finally, that the time for searching for pedagogical methods is past and now the formulation of educational aims, curricula, and methods is needed. Within that group, there were those who took an extreme position, holding that children must systematically learn the Jewish religion and its ceremonies.

The argument against that educational approach and policy, advanced by the progressives in the Labor Movement, was typical: A society in the making, it was claimed, cannot arrive at definite curricula since its social forms have not yet crystalized. Formulated

curricula mean the end of the development process, of searching for new ways in the social and the educational areas alike.[28]

The second topic, disputed in the public opinion dealt with a known problem regarding relations between the individual and the society, in particular,these relations in a socialistic society. A Socialistic democracy is expected to offer a significant measure of liberty and freedom to its members and as a consequence to use freedom of choice and decision as an educational principle. However, most of those societies, even though several of them were founded on voluntary membership, were seeking social uniformity and conformity to assure their ideological fulfillment. Such uniformity related to national, economic, political, and educational issues. As in other socialistic, radical societies, there were in the Labor Movement in Eretz-Israel members who demanded decisive rejection of painting the youngster with red brush in order to bring him up as a real socialist. The child must be acquainted with various kinds of social realities to come to a personal choice. Such an opinion was in accordance with the socialistic belief that once a society becomes socialistic and moral, compulsory means in education are not needed any more.

However, the most popular opinion was that education based on free choice, without a definite direction, is not a guarantee for achieving the main social aim: the continuation of a communal society and the Labor Movement as a whole in Eretz-Israel. The selection of a few basic concepts of progressive education and the implementation of them in established social forms became a dominant approach toward the end of the twenties and the beginning of the

thirties. To assure harmony between the two views, there was established a school community in which freedom and social direction were expected to be implemented simultaneously. The relations between the school and its immediate adult society differed from one place to another according to the character of the social unit in which the school was operating. Unlike the rural society which tended to be reflected in school life, the city school, without an immediate social environment, attempted to establish a planned social unit in which the educators had a dominant role in outlining and creating that social image.

2. The Educator

The second characteristic of the stage of Pedagogical Movement was the dynamic role that the educator played. The nature of this role naturally raises a question which is often stated, namely, how balance can be established in terms of progressive education between the child-centered school and the educator's dynamism. The educational situation, described and analized herein, provides an answer to this question in setting forth the process which took place during this stage. These two elements, supposedly in conflict with each other, found clear expression and mutual existence in educational work. In addition to participating in the formulation of educational aims, the educator played a dominant part in creating and improving the educational framework including curricula, teaching and learning methods, and school organization. That pedagogical independence, inspired by both social ideology and reality, motivated cooperation between educators who worked in the various schools of the Labor

Movement. Such cooperation generally fosters the process of crystalization of educational forms and ultimately deprives the individual educator of his independence. Educators were in favor of establishing common pedagogical bases, of exchanging experiences, and of creating common organizational forms. The educators, who had received their education as teachers in traditional as well as modern disciplines, held regional meetings, offered in-service training courses and even published a periodical called "Our Journal" in which they expressed their views regarding pedagogical issues.[29] This activity was described and assessed by the supervisor on behalf of the British Mandate government in the following words: "...a relation of trust exists between parents and teachers. Parents regard the teachers as envoys of their ideals...relations between teachers are based on mutual assistance,...decisions are made by the board of teachers."[30]

3. Work, Learning, and Social Activity--The Synthesis and Formulation of Educational Foundations

The third characteristic of the stage of pedagogical movement was the process of synthesis which occurred as a result of the alliance between the concepts of the new pedagogical outlook and the social reality in the making. That synthesis shaped the three cornerstones of Labor Movement education in Eretz-Israel until the law of state education was enacted in 1953.

Work

The formulation of the work as an educational concept was

very dynamic. At the beginning, it derived from the widespread concept in Germany of Arbeitschulle, or "School of Work" in Dewey's translation. It consisted of two elements, manual work and self-learning by the student.[31] At the time, the first aspect received more attention in Eretz-Israel, because of the connection this educational concept had with the social reality. From the middle of the twenties we can identify an inclination to argue that all educational advantages are inherent in manual work: work is a means for achieving social aims and values, such as responsibility, morality, mutual assistance, dedication, and the like. Work gives the social framework vitality and significance, since children feel that student society is a reality to the degree that they are involved in making decisions concerning their own life. A farm which supplies their food and a workshop in which they repair their furniture gives them the sense of being a society. All these activities demand decisions which have to be made by the society and its institutions. Since the main effect of the Labor Movement tended toward returning to a rural and agricultural way of life, the pedagogical implications of work were extended through the establishment of farms in rural as well as in city schools.[32]

In addition, a students farm enabled school to be shaped as a reflection of the immediate adult society. Typical of the process is the fact that, at the stage of educational experimentation, progressive educators used to rely on the theory that human culture is a function of earlier stages of human development, based on manual work. In the stage of pedagogical movement, there is more and more reliance on a

social ideology arguing that as the Jewish nation failed in labor it will heal in labor. This became the motto for many reformers. Religion of Work became a known term in describing this outlook.

In time, work as a pedagogical means became an independent element within the school. It became a self-contained factor which operated without the close connections it had had to learning and to social life as the common and basic source for these two other pedagogical elements.

Learning

In a historically significant conference of the Board of Culture of the General Organization of the Jewish Workers in Eretz-Israel, which was held in 1928, a distinguished educator of the Kibbutz--the communal and cooperative rural unit -- declared: "It was a time when we were waiting for the good will of the clild to learn. It was a mistake.... The Liberty (today) in our schools is a collective one... The individual has freedom as long as he is part of the collective... We came to the conclusion that we can not give up the basic knowledge the school has to give its students..... The connection between work and learning is a basic need but learning cannot be based on work...."[33] This statement exemplifies the process that shaped learning as a second cornerstone of progressive education throughout the stage of the pedagogical movement. In learning from work, better known as "accidental learning," the child learns only if he has an interest to know more about some aspect of his experience. In practice, it meant no curricula, no subject matter, and no schedule of courses. Instead, occasional groupings of students found a common

interest for a while. That approach stressed the integral connection between work and learning and used work as a pedagogical method.

The more the society crystalized its cultural and social forms, the more the school was under pressure to build a program based on these forms and on the Jewish national culture. The approach that the worker's child must not be inferior in his education in comparison to other children had its supporters, too. These various opinions were common at one point. That is to say, the view that it was necessary to create close relations between school and social reality was widely held. That outlook and those social pressures caused occassional learning to be shaped as a new method called The Central Theme. This method was described by Paul Blonsky, a distinguished educator at the height of the period of the progressive education in the Soviet Union: "...that is, a Central Theme in connection with which children receive the necessary information concerning nature, labor, and social life of mankind."[34] The Central Theme became simply a common formula, based on a consensus that education must be connected with current life, rather than being established on scientific and objective concepts. The meaning of life was the key for the selection of educational themes and their contents. In the progressive education of the society we deal with, the very beginning of formulating the Central Theme method was based on the social and cultural realities created by the society surrounding the school and on the developmental stages of children. Later, in the thirties, it was focussed on social and ideological trends emphasizing class conflict. Acquaintance with and loyalty to symbols, institutions, and organizations played a significant role in such

educational activity.

Social Activity

"Children Society"came to be the Israeli term describing the result of the process of social activity which took place during the three stages of development of progressive education described here. The first, both theoretically and practically, stressed the mutual dependence of experience and environment and consequently, the dependence between the individual and the social group. This was an adoptation of the basic concept of progressive education, that educational experiment is based on interaction between the individual and those external conditions that surround him.[35] As long as the adult society shaped its forms, it was accepted that the school was to be organized and operated as a prototype of this society.

Reflection of Social issues meant more and more reviewing of the quality of relations between the adult community and the children's society

Morality, mutual assistance, self-sufficiency, and productive work were the main values which constituted the content of that social activity. The educational direction was supposed to turn these values and social concepts into habits of life. The children's society was generally described as one which produces for itself what it needs, based on national and socialistic interests and ideas and on the social reality in its day-to-day activity. From the pedagogical point of view it could be defined as a transition form individual freedom to collective freedom, from child-centered to society-centered school. As the means

of the educational system were developed during the thirties, the liberty--both of the individual child and of his society--to cooperate in making decisions in pedagogical issues was reduced. At the time, the children's society, like work and learning, became a self-contained educational area while its autonomy was reduced.

A Central Theme as a primary means of learning, the farm as a practical expression of work, and children's society as an embryonic community--this became the sequence of synthesis that occurred mainly during the latter half of the twenties between progressive educational theory and the labor Movement's ideas and practices.

V. Stage C: From Pedagogical Movement to Educational System

The Thirties

Toward the end of the third decade of the century, the pressure for organizing education in the Labor Movement on institutional foundations was increased. The Board of Culture and Education of the General Organization of the Workers discussed at length the question of education and the relations between it and the Labor Movement. As a result, several decisions were made, which were intended to achieve two goals: The first was confirmation of educational reality, which consisted of three main sub-streams, according to the nature of the social background of the school: the city, the kibbutz, and the moshav (an agricultural settlement based on a combination of communal and private principles). The second decision, significant to our essay, defined the common aims of those sub-streams in the education of workers' children and enacted administrative regulations

which meant the formal beginning of a new stage, a transition to an established education. The main aim of education was defined as: "The learning of Jewish and general studies in accordance with the precepts of the Jewish Labor Movement in the country, the farm and the children's society are the foundations of education in the schools of workers' children."[36]

Inevitably, both the goal and the result of that policy were to keep authority in the hands of the central institution in charge of the educational system of the Labor Movement. The general statement, that the function of those schools is to educate in the spirit of the Labor Movement, reveals the direction of the process which took effect through out the thirties. The need for centralization was felt not only because of the acute class and social dispute the Labor Movement faced, but also because the Labor Movement itself consisted of various movements and parties. The more those social frameworks became homogeneous and centralized themselves, the more the Labor Movement as a whole turned into a kind of federation of social units based on a common platform and common institutions. The same situation occurred in education also. Education in the communal villages was organized in different ways since those villages differed in social and political outlook. The direct contact between teachers from various places decreased and the central administration became a means of communication between them. The pedagogical elements which characterized the synthesis between progressive concepts in education and social and national ideas became stable and were used as common forms of the educational system.

That stage of development was characterized by the transition of education from being inspired by and related to its close and immediate environment to being dependent on the Labor Movement as a whole, its political interests, institutions, and symbols. The school, to fulfill its destiny, was then necessarily directed by social needs, interests, and aims, and formulated by social institutions which presented a complicated system of new social values and political heterogeneity in a period of social struggle.

The linkage between education and life became the focus of the educational outlook and policy of the labor movement. The reality, consisting of social and national contrasts and disputes, received tremendous attention, mainly in the school environment and by teacher-student conversations, but also through the curriculum of the humanities. Implied teachings of the Jewish cultural heritage, such as the social approach of the prophets, were used extensively. That period was marked also by increasing influence of educationists and ideologists who criticized the pedagogical approach, adapted practically by the European trends in progressive education. Z. Bernfeld ,[37] and M. Adler[38] warned of the inability of this kind of education to bring about a change in the traditional capitalistic system. They viewed the new school as a way insubordinate children were educated into obedience to a social system that the progressive education should have been striving to replace. Adler claimed that socialistic education can not be neutral, but must face social controversies and choose a definite direction.

According to this outlook, the ideals, the objectives,

the functions, and the institutions of the Labor Movement became the central force in the formulation and direction of the education of workers' children. The link between education and political goals served as a pedagogical paradigm that moved from one extreme, it is to say the child as a pedagogical center, toward the other extreme of society and its objectives as the focus of educational process. The main feature of this stage was the construction of pedagogical tools and regulations that characterize an educational system. More and more emphasis was put on the school as an instrument of the labor Movement in order to educate a generation with a deep national and socialistic awareness. The central institution appointed supervisors and teachers, decided on positions, established a central educational periodical, and formulated the first common curricula, which came out in 1937.

In 1935, just at the peak of social dispute and tension, a protocol was signed between the central committee of the General Organization of the Jewish Workers and the National Committee concerning the joining of the educational system of the Labor Movement to the central administrative system of the Jewish community. In exchange, it was stated that certain privileges, as a part of pedagogical independence, would be maintained: the right to celebrate May Day, to wave a red flag in schools, and to interpret contemporary issues according to the spirit and interests of the Labor Movement. [39] A flare-up ensues among politicians in the national institutions and mainly in public opinion. The Labor Movement was blamed for creating two nations in Eretz-Israel because of its separate and isolated system.

These three privileges were denounced as expressions of national separatism. It was argued that the educational system had become a political means. Naturally, this tension and confrontati , which reflected the quality of the dispute within the Jewish community on its way to national soveriegnty, brought the educational system of the Labor Movement to a more strict centralization.

Toward the end of the thirties, social tension was reduced. In 1939, the General Board of Education of the workers' children was gathered for the decision to give up administrative independence while keeping completely pedagogical rights. This convention was named by its participants as a turning point. In fact, the political events of 1939 marked a new era in the world and in Eretz-Israel also. Political events, mainly World War II, changed the direction of emphasis. In this new reality the links between the various social and political groups in Eretz-Israel were emphasized. Later on, the educational system of the Labor Movement grew in accordance with the increasing power of the Labor Movement in the political spectrum. As was mentioned above, since Israel was established the idea of statehood became widespread while the old construction of sub-systems in education was denounced more and more as useless in the new social and national reality. In 1953, they were replaced by a uniform system in education.

VI. Summary and Conclusions

The fate of progressive educators and their ideas has not been the same in all societies. Most of those societies which during this century adopted the basic concepts of progressive education have gone

through a process of self-shaping. Societies whose backgrounds were characterized by anti-traditional or even revolutionary outlook, and which in practice had a degree of communal life, were inclined to co-operate with the new education. However, as the process of social formation advanced, the possibility of complete and pure achievement of the new educational concepts was reduced or diminished. Educators whose loyalty to their educational beliefs was stronger than their social consciousness found themselves on the edge of the educational mainstream and very often chose to leave and re-develop small educational units, that is to say, they returned to the experimental stage. Many others, who adjusted to the changes which took place in the social constructions, found themselves in a quite different situation, not only as agents of the new society, but also as envoys of adjusted educational theory. Such a process is reflected typically in the writings of a prominent leader of progressive education in Eretz-Israel, M. Beigel, who became in the early thirties the supervisor of the educational system of the Labor Movement. A review of his articles confirms the basic assumption expressed in this paper, that progressive education in Eretz-Israel, since its fundamental concepts were adopted by the Labor Movement, has gone through three stages, described and analyzed above. In 1922, in an article called "Education of Work and Nationalism,"[40] he described the nature of education through work, and listed the following principles: 1) liberation of the young generation from subordination to the book; 2) liberation of infants from the enforcement of educational methods; 3) delivery of the center of education from the child's eyes to his hands and muscles; 4) liber-

ation of the creative will of the student; 5) increase of the value of work and the worker within the society; 6) increase of the influence of the immediate surroundings on school activity.

He added: "Education of work is not an issue of content, but of a new educational method which can...change the spiritual quality of the next generation." Although claiming that those principles had to be implemented moderately in the Jewish culture, he insisted that such principles are the only guarantee of moulding a new man in order to achieve a national rejuvenation.

In 1928, toward the end of the pedagogical movement stage, in describing the school of workers' children in the city he argued: "The aim is not only to train the child's muscles to work and to reach habits of work, but also to develop his feeling that manual work is one of the main foundations of man's life and one of the primary means in building the country and creating a new society in it...The creation of a new society is our central idea and as such it has to be the central focus of education."[41]

In 1934, in the stage termed an educational system he stated categorically: "...It is not the method that is important but the personality of the teacher. ...It is necessary to bring the teacher close to the destiny and ideas of the working society...."[42]

Any attempt to compare the course of the progressive education in Eretz-Israel to its course in other societies demands a systematic comparative analysis. In general, it seems accurate to say that we can find a similar process of development of progressive education in the Soviet Union.[43] The same stages of development may be identified, although they occurred in quite a different social realm. In Eretz-

Israel a new society, based on national foundations was created to further a common national goal. The Jewish community in Eretz-Israel was a voluntary democracy whose character was shaped through a continuous confrontation between social groups or classes with different social and national outlooks; however, in no way can we describe it as founded on economic or industrial concepts. In the Soviet Union, during the twenties, which were described as the period of experimentation or romanticism,[44] the dependence of pedagogical activity on the political authorities and their representatives was completed. Even in the early twenties, changes in pedagogical methods were conditioned by the consent or the decree of authorities.

What made the process of the development of progressive education in Eretz-Israel exceptional is the fact that during the stage of the pedagogical movement there were attempts to create a central authority based on economic dependence and on ideological persuasion typical of democracy. However, during the thirties, when an educational system for workers' children was brought into existence, we can easily identify characteristics which were laid down in previous periods - such characteristics as learning by the Central Theme method, school farms, an active student society, friendly relations between teachers and students, and certain pedagogical authority, still in the hands of the educator. It is obvious that this difference is a result of the character of the society and the nature of the processes which took place within it. However, that meaningful difference, does not change the nature of our basic assumption defined in the introduction of this paper: ad ptation of new theories in education, in particular those which hold a social dimension, has been found historically as

prerequisite for reaching a desirable stage of a pedagogical movement. Such an adoptation based on the perception that new social order can be achieved by the cooperation among new types of individuals. New education is expected to share in creating these working, dynamic and creative individuals. Since alliance between the social outlook and educational concepts has been achieved, the metamorphosis of educational concepts has become a function of the social process, of its direction and of the stable forms which finally came into being.

Notes and References

1. John Dewey, Impressions of Soviet Russia and the Revolutionary World, Mexico-China-Turkey 1929. (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University 1964)

2. Ibid., pp. 79, 88.

3. Ibidl, p. 79, W, W Brickman's comment No 32.

4. Ibid., pp. 100-112.

5. Eretz-Israel is the name of the territory ruled by the British Government and called Palestine. The name was changed to Israel after independence.

6. M. Atias, Knoset Israel in Eretz-Israel (Jerusalem The National Committee, 1944) p.29

7. The Zionist-World Organization was in charge of Jewish-national education in Eretz-Israel until the end of 1932.

8. In the first elected assembly these parties had 81 of the whole body of 221 representatives.

9. The term "Settlement" was used as the name describing the organized Jewish community in Eretz-Israel until independence.

10. P. Oierbach, "The Work Concept in School" Education Volume I, p.127.

11. M.A. Beigel "Education of Work and Nationalism" Bamasechet (Tel-Aviv: The Central committee of the workers of the "Hamerkaz-Lechinuch" - The Center of Education, 1937).

12. D. Edelson "A diary of educational work in Har-Tuv during the years 1915-1916" Archives of the Teachers Organization, File No. A-61 (manuscript)

13. Ibid., p. 8.

14. A.P. Pinkevitch, The New Education in the Soviet Republic (New York: The John Day Company, 1929) translated into English by Nucia Perlmuter. Pinkervitch, president of second state university of Moscow attributes to Sharrelman the opinion that "Manual activity plays a role only in the degree that is indispensable and useful in the solving of spiritual problems".

15. Dewey's classification of the impulses and instincts which are available in the school were used surprisingly, by Edelson, in his pedagogical work. See J. Dewey School and Society (Chicago, Illinois, The University of Chicago Press) pp 42-45 and D., Edelson op. cit. pp. XVI-XV, 32-33

16. J., Ron-Polani., The First Experiment, (Tel Aviv: Otzar Hamore 1961)

17. "The New Education in Eretz-Israel" (Vienna: The Institute for Research on Childhood and Youth, October 1922).

18. The first assembly of the Jewish Teachers in Eretz-Israel 1920 (protocol). Archives of the Teachers' Organization File No 518.

19. In a letter sent to Z. Bernfeld two weeks before opening the school, the founders expressed their wish to follow generally Dewey's outlook in education. Archives of Teachers Organization, File A-34 (School of Work).

20. The New Education in Eretz-Israel, (The institute for research on Childhood and Youth, October 1922 No 1), editorial comment.

21. D. Ben-Gurion in the debate of the Central Committee of the General Organization of Jewish Workers. Archives of the General Organization of Jewish Workers. July 25, 1934.

22. D. Edelson, "A School of Workers' Children" Pinkas Vol III No 8 Jerusalem 1923.

23. M. Assaf, "Education of Our Children", Kuntress, No 176, 1924.

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25. Ibid. pp 3-4.

26. Ibid. p 8.

27. Z. Zohar, On the Education of the (Next) Generation. (Warsaw: The Cooperative Hashomri Hamerkazi, 1931) p. 92

28. These views were expressed in the conference of the Cultural Board of the General Organization of the Jewish Workers in 1928, published in the newspaper Davar, No 986.

29. Alonenu (Our Journal), Journal of questions about work in the workers' children schools 1926-1927.

30. J. Bentuich, "The schools of the Cultural Committee" (report). The General Zionist Archives File S 2 / 114 I.

31. J. Polani, "Work by Pupils and its value in Education" Education, Vol V, 1921, p. 312.

32. Educating students of the city schools toward a rural way of life became a social and educational goal in the late twenties and during the thirties.

33. H. Shifroni, A report on the School in the Kibbutz, delivered in the board of culture of the General Organization of the Jewish Workers, 1928, Davar, No 986.

34. P. Blonsky, "Russia", in I.L. Kandel (ed) Educational Yearbook of the International Institute of Teachers College Columbia University 1927 (New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University 1928.) p. 324

35. See, J. Dewey, Experience and Education (New York, Collier Books 1963) Chapter III.

36. The resolutions of the Board of Culture of the General Organization of the Jewish workers in Eretz-Israel 1928, published in Davar No 986.

37. Z. Bernfeld, Die Schulgeminde and ihre Fuktion Klasenkampf (Berlin, E. Laubsche Verlaosbuchhandlung, 1921.)

38. M. Adler, Neue Menchen, translated into Hebrew by E. Hachoen, (Warsaw, The Cooperative Hashomer Hamerkazi, 1931). M. Adler was a well-known and influential socialist ideologist in Austria and world wide.

39. Protocol of the convention of the National Committee, July 31, 1935. The central Zionist Archives, File No J_1/7236, pp, 1-10.

40. M, A. Beigel, Op. cit.

41. M, A. Beigel, "A report of Workers' Children's Schools in the City", delivered at the convention of the Board of Culture of the General Organization of the Jewish workers, 1928.

42. M, A. Beigel, "A report of the situation in the Workers' Children's Educational System", Presented to the Board of Education of the Labor Movement, 1934. Labor Archives file No 215 IV 1632.

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44. William, W. Brickman, "The Historical Setting after the Revolution" in George Z, F. Bereday, William W. Brickman, and Gerald H. Read (eds), The Changing Soviet School (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), p.55.